

# HOLD ON



*A Series of Negro Spirituals  
as Selected and Arranged*

*by*

HALL JOHNSON



CITY CALLED HEAVEN

Jesus, Lay Your Head in de Winder

WAY UP IN HEAVEN

HOLD ON

*Price 40c net*

*Except Canada & Foreign*

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MUSIC

M1671  
.J665  
H65  
1930



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## Introduction



The present series of arrangements is the result of an attempt to make available to concert soloists a group of Negro Spirituals hitherto obtainable for ensembles only. These songs, while less familiar, possess all the musical and racial charm of the old favorites and have become widely known through their performance by the Hall Johnson Negro Choir.

Of course, no solo singer of Negro Spirituals can hope to equal the effects obtained when these songs are sung by large groups of unaccompanied Negro voices. However, in order to approximate these effects, Mr. Johnson has tried, in the present arrangements, to surround the solo voice with piano accompaniments which will suggest the characteristic rhythms, counter-melodies and harmonic flavors supplied, in more primitive performances, by the other singers.

For the past few years these arrangements (in manuscript) have been frequently used and heartily recommended by the best Negro singers of Spirituals, including Roland Hayes, Harry T. Burleigh, Abbie Mitchell and Marian Anderson. In fact, it is at the urgent request of many singers that they are now being offered to the public.

—PUBLISHER'S NOTE.



for Miss Estelle Pinkney  
from Hall Johnson  
New York, 1930

Dedicated to Arthur D. Porter

# HOLD ON!

Negro Spiritual

Arr. by HALL JOHNSON

Moderato

The first system of the musical score is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and then a quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment starts with a bass line of eighth notes (F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3) and a treble line of eighth notes (F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5). Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano) for the vocal line and *f* (forte) for the piano accompaniment. The system concludes with a repeat sign and a final cadence.

No-ah, No-  
No-ah said

The second system continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line has lyrics: "ah, lem - me come in Do's all fas' - 'n an' de win-der's pinned. 'You done los' yo' track, Can't plough straight 'n keep a-look-in' back." The piano accompaniment provides a steady rhythmic foundation with eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamics include *f* (forte) for the piano accompaniment and *p* (piano) for the vocal line.

- ah, lem - me come in Do's all fas' - 'n an' de win-der's pinned.  
"You done los' yo' track, Can't plough straight 'n keep a-look-in' back."

The third system continues the vocal and piano parts. The vocal line has lyrics: "Keep yo' hand on de plow, Hold on! Keep yo' hand on de plow, Hold on!" The piano accompaniment continues with eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamics include *f* (forte) for the piano accompaniment and *p* (piano) for the vocal line. The system concludes with a repeat sign and a final cadence.

Keep yo' hand on de plow, Hold on!  
Keep yo' hand on de plow, Hold on!



*mp* Hold on! Hold on! *f* Keep yo' —

*p*

*Red.*

hand on de plow, Hold on! Hold on!

1 2

*p* Ma - ry had a gol - den chain, — Ev - 'ry link —  
Keep on plough - in' an' don' - cher tire, — Ev - 'ry row —

*pp*

— was m' Je - sus' name. — Keep yo' hand on de plow, Hold on!  
— goes hîer an hîer. — Keep yo' hand on de plow, Hold on!



*mf*

Hold on! Hold on! Keep yo' hand on de

*p* *ben marcato*

plow, Hold on! Hold on! If you wan-ner git to

*mf*

Heb'n I'll tell you how, Jes' keep yo' han' on de gos-pel plow. Keep yo' hand stays in-a yo' han' It'll lan' you straight in de Prom-is' Lan'. Keep yo' hand

*p cantando*

on de plow. Hold on! If dat plow on! Hold

on de plow. Hold

*f*



on! Hold on! Keep yo' hand on de plow. Hold

*mf*

This system contains the first line of the musical score. It features a vocal melody in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The lyrics are 'on! Hold on! Keep yo' hand on de plow. Hold'. The piano part begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic.

on! Hold on! Hold on! Keep yo'

*ff*

*f*

This system contains the second line of the musical score. The vocal melody continues with the lyrics 'on! Hold on! Hold on! Keep yo''. The piano accompaniment features a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic in the vocal line and a forte (*f*) dynamic in the piano line. There are some markings in parentheses in the piano part.

hand on de plow, Hold on! Hold on! Hold

*pp*

*pp*

This system contains the third line of the musical score. The vocal melody continues with the lyrics 'hand on de plow, Hold on! Hold on! Hold'. The piano accompaniment features a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic in both the vocal and piano parts.

on! Keep yo' hand on de plow, Hold on!

*rallen - tan - do*

*colla voce*

This system contains the fourth line of the musical score. The vocal melody continues with the lyrics 'on! Keep yo' hand on de plow, Hold on!'. The piano accompaniment features a *rallen - tan - do* (rallentando) marking and a *colla voce* (colla voce) marking.







